

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT L 00239 141332Z
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6528

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0239

NODIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: CASC PFOR US UG
SUBJECT: NEGOTIATING WITH AMIN

REF: (A) STATE 043013, (B) PORT LOUIS 177

1. SHOULD YOU AT ANY TIME NEED TO SEND SOMEONE TO UGANDA TO TALK WITH AMIN ON WHATEVER SUBJECT, I WOULD OF COURSE BE MORE THAN WILLING TO GO, AND COULD GO ON SHORT NOTICE, DEPENDING ON AIRLINE SERVICE. (THERE IS DIRECT SERVICE MAURITIUS-NAIROBI ON MONDAYS, THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS, ALL EVENING DEPARTURES, AND SUNDAY EVENING FLIGHT DIRECT TO ENTEBBE.)

2. ALTHOUGH AMIN WAS DISPLEASED WITH OUR ACTION OF CLOSING EMBASSY KAMPALA IN NOVEMBER 1973 AND THE VERY SHORT NOTICE WE (DELIBERATELY) GAVE HIM, HE DID NOT DENOUNCE ME PERSONALLY, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT WAS A GOVERNMENTAL DECISION. AT SUBSEQUENT ENCOUNTER WITH AMIN DURING OAU SUMMIT IN MAURITIUS LAST JULY HE WAS EFFUSIVELY FRIENDLY, SOMEWHAT TO MY EMBARRASSMENT (SEE 76 PORT LOUIS 577 EXDIS).

3. THERE WOULD BE SOME ADVANTAGE IN SENDING SOMEONE TO DEAL WITH AMIN WHOM HE KNOWS FROM PAST. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW
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IT WOULD HELP TO HAVE SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD EXPERIENCE TRYING TO DECIPHER HIS OFTEN INARTICULATE AND SEEMINGLY IRRATIONAL STATEMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN OCTOBER 1973 WHEN HE THREATENED TO ARREST ALL AMERICANS IN UGANDA STARTING WITH ME -- A THREAT WHICH UNDERSTANDABLY ALARMED WASHINGTON -- I BELIEVE I CORRECTLY INTERPRETED HIS MEANING. HE THOUGHT THAT IF WE "INTERVENED" IN MIDDLE EAST WAR ON SIDE OF ISRAEL, WITH HIS ARMED FORCES

ALLEGEDLY SUPPORTING THE ARABS, THE "RULES OF WAR" MADE OUR TWO COUNTRIES BELLIGERENTS AND HE WOULD BE REQUIRED TO INTERN ALL "ENEMY ALIENS." WHEN UNDER INSTRUCTIONS I REMINDED HIM OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD AMERICANS RESIDENT IN UGANDA, HE BACKED DOWN BY SHIFTING TO ONE OF HIS "INVASION" SCARES.

4. BELIEVE I AM ON RECORD SINCE 1972 AS CONSIDERING AMIN THOROUGHLY DESPICABLE, BUT IF YOU NEED SOMEONE TO DEAL WITH HIM, I'D BE WILLING TO GIVE IT A TRY.

5. IN THINKING ABOUT OUR PROBLEMS WITH AMIN, THE OBVIOUS SOLUTION WOULD BE TO GET ALL AMCITS TO LEAVE UGANDA, TO TAKE AWAY FROM AMIN HIS ONLY MEANS OF "GETTING AT" US. FROM YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE YOU KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO GET MISSIONARIES TO LEAVE AREAS OF DANGER, AND HOW THEY TEND TO DRIFT BACK IN EVEN IF THEY ARE CONVINCED TO DEPART TEMPORARILY. THE TEACHERS IN UGANDA ARE QUASI-MISSIONARIES AND BEHAVE IN MUCH THE SAME FASHION. THE AMERICANS HELPING AMIN WITH HIS AIRLINE ARE PROBABLY RELUCTANT TO GIVE UP THE GOOD DEAL THEY HAVE AND PROBABLY FEEL SECURE THROUGH BEING UNDER HIS PERSONAL PROTECTION.

6. AMIN LIKES TO THREATEN THE AMERICANS IN UGANDA BUT HE ALTERNATES HIS THREATS WITH PRAISE FOR THE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION THEY ARE MAKING TO THE COUNTRY. I BELIEVE HE DOES NOT REALLY INTEND THEM ANY HARM BUT SIMPLY USES THEM TO TRY TO AFFECT THE USG'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS REGIME AND AS PART OF HIS GENERAL POSTURING BEFORE THE WORLD AS "THE ONLY LEADER WHO IS NOT IN THE POCKET OF THE IMPERIALISTS."
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7. ALL I CAN SUGGEST IS THAT FOR THOSE RESIDENT AMCITS WHO HAVE A SPONSORING ORGANIZATION IN U.S., MAXIMUM PERSUASION BE USED TO CONVINCE THEM TO ORDER REPEAT ORDER THEIR PEOPLE TO LEAVE UGANDA FOR THE DURATION OF AMIN'S REGIME.
KEELEY

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